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NSC BRIEFING

17 August 1959

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LAOS

II. Between 26 July and 3 August, three rifle regiments of the North Vietnamese 325th Division, normally located in the Dong Hoi area near the demarcation line, moved into the area immediate north of the demilitarized zone, according to [redacted]  
South Vietnamese First Corps.

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- A. Between 3 and 8 August, two of these regiments moved toward the Laotian border, according same source.
- B. South Vietnamese First Corps put on alert status as result these alleged troop movements.

C. [redacted] movement of North Vietnamese 324th Division from Vinh area toward Laotian border.

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- 1. [redacted] camps in

Vinh area nearly deserted in early August.

III. Laotian government meanwhile beginning operations against Communist salients in Sam Neua and Phong Saly Provinces, using hit-and-run tactics.

- A. Some reports that skirmishes have been renewed, possibly in connection with this effort.

IV. Hanoi and Peiping strongly attacking US as power behind the scenes in Laos.

- A. North Vietnamese Vice Minister of Foreign Defense said Hanoi will not remain indifferent to foreign military intervention. And Hanoi propaganda claims that "vast areas" in Laos have been "liberated" suggests intent to maintain Communist hold in areas of recent fighting.

- B. Chicom Foreign Ministry statement has warned that US and Laotian activities that "menace the security of China will certainly be opposed by the Chinese."

- C. Moscow, by contrast, is milder, placing blame for Laotian crisis on Phoui government, not on US.

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